

T H E
A P P E N D I X :

O R, S O M E
O B S E R V A T I O N S
O N T H E

Expediency of the PETITION of the AFRICANS, living in BOSTON, &c. lately presented to the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of this Province.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

The PETITION referred to.

LIKEWISE,

THOUGHTS ON SLAVERY. With a useful EXTRACT from the Massachusetts Spy, of January 28, 1773, by way of an Address to the MEMBERS of the ASSEMBLY.

By a Lover of Constitutional LIBERTY.

B O S T O N : N. E.

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THE
APPENDIX:

O R,
OBSERVATIONS, &c.

*He that stealeth and selleth a Man
shall surely be put to Death.*

EXODUS.

I WAS lately looking into a small Treatise, wrote by Mr. JAMES SWAN, a Native of Great-Britain, entitled, "A Dissuasion to Great-Britain, and her Colonies, from the Slave-Trade," and after perusing the same, I readily passed over with Cadour some small Errors in the Diction of the same, occasioned by the necessary Absence of the Gentleman to whom it was committed by the Author to correct, * which have

* Since the Publication of the Dissuasion, there has been an Errata printed, which is affixed to the few Copies yet unfold.

have so industriously been made a handle of by many, who, we may justly suppose are Enemies to the *Liberties* of Mankind, and give their Opinions more from Prejudice and sordid Self-interest, than from an honest unbiassed Regard to the Rights of the Subject.

THE close reasoning and disinterested Attachment shewn by our young Author, throughout the whole of this useful Tract, for the Cause of *Freedom*, ought not to be passed over in Silence ; and I am astonished so many of our Patrons for Liberty should be silent in this Respect. I must surely join with our Author in that Sentence towards the close of his Performance, “ That the Will to do a good Action is next in order to the Action itself.”

THE Cause is good ! The abolishing so base and scandalous a Trade, which reflects the highest Disgrace on any People, much more thse who *wear* the Christian Name, ought to be taken into the serious Consideration of our wise LEGISLATORS, who I trust and heartily wish may take this Matter under their immediate Cognizance.

FOR this People to be *talking* of *Liberty*, and, at the same Time to continue importing and making *Slaves* of whole Cargoes of their Fellow Creatures, must, I think, be judged by those, who allow themselves to think freely, a Solæcism in Language.

I would ask those mighty Sticklers for *Slavery*, Whether the *Africans* were not born as free as *British* Subjects ? If so, are they not justly entitled to, and may they not expect, both by the Laws of God and Man, to inherit and possess every Priviledge which we enjoy ? Is
not

not this diabolical and mercenary Trade of *Man-stealing* or *Slave-making*, as expressly against the Laws of God, as it is repugnant to the CHARACTER of this Province, which must be deemed the great Bulwark and Support of our *Liberty* ?

BUT how shocking the Thought ! That so many of our Brethren should remain in perpetual *Slavery* ! Nature recoils at it ! But true it is, that Millions of these distressed People are under this cruel Yoke ; many of them, I am sorry and even blush to say it, are among us, a People *professing* to fear God and hate Covetousness ! But let it not be told in *New-England* ! Publish it not in the Streets of *America*, that any of these People are yet held in *Bondage* ! Cry aloud, ye Fathers of the People, I mean the Stewards in God's Household ! who must shortly give an Account of your Stewardship ! Spare not to tell the People of their gross Iniquity in this Respect ! Ask yourselves, Whether you have borne public Testimony against such abominable Practices as those of *Man-stealing* and *Slave-making* ? Ye Judges of the Earth ! Is it not your Duty likewise to bear Testimony against such vile Proceedings, when you are giving your Charge to the Grand Juries !

IT must afford the highest Satisfaction to every Friend of Mankind, to hear that a Petition is laid before the *General Assembly* now sitting in *Boston*, in favour of these poor oppressed *Black People*, who are continually groaning under the heavy Yoke of *Slavery* ; many of whom are used in a cruel Manner by some, who *call* themselves Christians, and who *pretend* they buy them in order to instruct them in the Principles of the Christian Religion, however contrary to which they may behave in this Respect, if they are not faulty in any other.

GREAT

GREAT Success is expected from this Petition, since THOSE, who are the Guardians of our Rights, are led and influenced by the true Principles of *Liberty*, and a sincere Desire to promote the good of Mankind : But should any (as doubtless some of the *Assembly* are Owners of *Slaves*) be influenced by opposite Motives, that of a mercenary Thirst after Money, I should be sorry.

BUT I would hope better Things of those worthy *Gentlemen*, many of whom in Times past, to their immortal Honor be it spoken, have distinguished themselves for their steady and disinterested Conduct and firm Attachment to the Constitution ; whose noble and patriotic Resolves will hand their Names down to Generations yet unborn, who will read them with Applause.

SHOULD those *Slaves* fail of Success in petitioning the *General Assembly*, may they not seek another Way of Redress, namely, by suing for their Services ? I am well informed there have been Numbers freed in several Country Towns, and heartily wish others may meet with the same Success, who may hereafter seek this last Method of Redress, when every other shall fail them.

WHAT pity it is, that every Town did not instruct their Representatives, relative to this most interesting and important Subject, when they lately took into their Consideration some other weighty Matters, in regard to Freedom, and the Infringements that have been made on the Constitution.

HAD such Instructions been committed to those *Gentlemen*, who are the Guardians and Patrons of *Liberty*, it might, perhaps, have had a salutary Effect
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in bringing about so desirable a Measure, and greatly tended to relive those oppressed *Black People* from *Bondage*.

HOWEVER, I trust the Resolutions lately come in- to by this, as well as many of our worthy and patriotic Country Towns in this Province, will sufficiently justify the Expediency as well as absolute Necessity of the before-mentioned *Petition of Grievance*, and may answer a valuable Purpose, in effecting a Redress although it may be objected to by many who are making unjust Gain by wickedly detaining these People in *Slavery*.

MANY will object to the freeing the *Slaves* among us, by saying, If they are set at Liberty they will turn Vagrants, and thereby become a Pest to Society ; that our Streets will be filled with Robbers, House-breakers, &c. In Answer to which I would ask this Question, What Right had we to bring those People among us, or to encourage so iniquitous a Trade ? Surely, if we had not a Right to bring them from their own Country, (which I am certain no one can dispute) they ought to be returned thereto, at the public Expende, if they chuse it, which, doubtless, would be the Case with many. But those who chuse to tarry in this Country after they are set at Liberty, we doubt not would in general behave well ; if they should not, it must be remembered, they are subject to the Common Law of the Land,

SHOULD such an Event take Place, (I mean setting at liberty those who are bound, it would surely serve to shew, that, instead of being pretended Friends to Liberty, we are really hearty for the general and unalienable Rights of Mankind.

A LOVER OF TRUE LIBERTY.

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Province of the MASSACHUSETTS-BAY:

To his Excellency
THOMAS HUTCHINSON, Esq;
GOVERNOR ;

To the Honorable
His Majesty's COUNCIL; and

To the Honorable House of REPRESENTATIVES
in General Court assembled at BOSTON, the
6th Day of *January*, 1773.

The humble PETITION of many SLAVES,
living in the Town of BOSTON, and other
Towns in the Province is this, namely,

THAT your EXCELLENCY and Honors; and
the Honorable the Representatives would
be pleased to take their unhappy State and Con-
dition under your wise and just Considera-
tion.

WE desire to bless God, who loves Man-
kind, who sent his Son to die for their Salvation,
and who is no Respector of Persons ; that he hath
lately put it into the Hearts of Multitudes on both
Sides of the Water, to bear our Burthens, some
of whom are Men of great Note and Influence ;
who have pleaded our Cause with Arguments
which we hope will have their weight with this
Honorable Court.

WE presume not to dictate to your EXCEL-
LENCY and Honors, being willing to rest our
Cause on your Humanity and Justice ; yet would
beg Leave to say a Word or two on the Subject.

ALTHOUGH some of the Negroes are vicious,
(who doubtless may be punished and restrained
by the same Laws which are in Force against
other of the King's Subjects) there are many
others of a quite different Character, and who,

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if made free, would soon be able as well as willing to bear a Part in the Public Charges ; many of them of good natural Parts, are discreet, sober, honest, and industrious ; and may it not be said of many, that they are virtuous and religious, although their Condition is in itself so unfriendly to Religion, and every moral Virtue except *Patience*. How many of that Number have there been, and now are in this Province, who have had every Day of their Lives imbittered with this most intollerable Reflection, That, let their Behaviour be what it will, neither they, nor their Children to all Generations, shall ever be able to do, or to possess and enjoy any Thing, no, not even *Life itself*, but in a Manner as the *Beasts that perish*.

WE have no Property ! We have no Wives ! No Children ! We have no City ! No Country ! But we have a Father in Heaven, and we are determined, as far as his Grace shall enable us, and as far as our degraded contemptuous Life will admit, to keep all his Commandments : Especially will we be obedient to our Masters, so long as GOD in his sovereign Providence shall *suffer* us to be holden in Bondage.

It would be impudent, if not presumptuous in us, to suggest to your Excellency and Honors any Law or Laws proper to be made, in relation to our unhappy State, which, although our greatest Unhappiness, is not our *Fault* ; and this gives us great Encouragement to pray and hope for such Relief as is consistent with your Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness.

WE think ourselves very happy, that we may thus address the Great and General Court of this Province,

Province, which great and good Court is to us, the best Judge, under God, of what is wise, just, and good.

We humbly beg Leave to add but this one Thing more : We pray for such Relief only, which by no Possibility can ever be productive of the least Wrong or Injury to our Masters ; but to us will be as Life from the dead.

Signed, FELIX.

Thoughts on SLAVERY.

*Friend, Parent, Neighbour, first I will embrace,
My Country next, and next all human Race."*

POPE.

WISE and good Men in all Ages have celebrated Patriotism as a Virtue of the first Magnitude, and all Men who shine in the List of Fame are renowned for Humanity, or a benevolent Regard to *all* their Fellow Men, this is one of the brightest Jewels in their Crown of Glory ; and without this no Man will ever enter the Temple of Fame below, nor the Gates of Heaven above. Animated with this Principle, I would plead for Justice in behalf of the most unhappy Part of our Species—the Negroes. This People have been treated in a Manner which disgraces Humanity and the Laws of Heaven ; and all the sacred Ties of Nature, Reason, and Conscience have been violated to rob this poor People of the Gifts of GOD !

SOME.

SOME feeble Efforts have of late been made to justify the black and enormous Crimes above mentioned, but Reason and Conscience mock their vain Attempts, while the Saviour and Judge of the World condemns them and their Cause with this eternal Rule of Righteousness, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.* With this Golden Rule before him, what Christian can countenance the *enslaving* his Fellow Men? By this Practice of *Slave-making*, every Principle of Justice, Humanity, and Righteousness is flagrantly violated; and for such Iniquity we have the utmost Reason to expect that God will visit us with his righteous Judgments.

To avert those deserved Judgments, it is hoped the patriotic Legislature of this Province, will in their present Session make a Law to prevent the Importation of any more *Slaves* into this Government: And also adopt some Method to relieve those who are now in *Bondage* in the Province. Unless we *deal justly and love Mercy*, we cannot expect any Thing but the Frowns of that God who *loveth Righteousness*.

THE word of God commands us to give Honor to whom Honor is due, and surely it is not due to any more than to those who relieve the oppressed, and give *Liberty* to them who are in *Bondage*: We desire therefore to mention two honorable Gentlemen who have, from Christian Principles of *Liberty*, given *Freedom* to their *Slaves*, viz. Mr. ROBERT PIERPONT of Boston, and Major FULLER of Newton. May their noble Example be imitated by all Christians, and the Blessings of Heaven descend on them and on all who do likewise.

THE SONS OF AFRICA.

The following Piece is taken from the MASSACHUSETTS SPY, of Thursday, *January 28*, 1773, having been abridged and corrected by the Author.

To the MEMBERS of the GENERAL COURT,
assembled at BOSTON, the 6th Instant.

GENTLEMEN,

HAVING seen a Petition that is intended to be laid before you, in the Name of many *Slaves*, living in *Boston* and other Towns in the Province, praying, That you would be pleased to take their unhappy State and Condition under Consideration, and give them such Relief as is consistent with your Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness. I am led to make a few Observations on the Subject, which I hope may not be unuseful, previous to your taking it up.

FIRST. I would beg leave to remark, That we have been for a Number of Years contending and struggling for the recovery of our natural and Charter Rights, and yet never appeared to consider that we act in direct Opposition thereto. It is thus declared in the Charter, *viz.* " And further
" Our Will and Pleasure is, and we do hereby for Us, Our Heirs, and Successors, grant,
" establish, and Ordain, that all and every of
" the Subjects of Us, Our Heirs, and Successors,
" which shall go to and inhabit within our said
" Province and Territory and every of their Children which shall happen to be born there, or
" on the Seas in going thither, or returning from
" thence, shall have and enjoy all Liberties
" and

“ and Immunities of *free* and natural Subjects
 “ within any of the Dominions of Us, Our
 “ Heirs, and Successors, to all Intents, Construc-
 “ tions, and Purposes whatsoever, as if they and
 “ every of them were born within this Our Realm of
 “ *England*,” which at once throws down all Founda-
 tion to support any Laws of the Province allowing
 the keeping *Slaves*. I always understood (I hope I
 am not mistaken) that no Laws could be enacted
 contrary to the Charter, and it is plain that
 at the granting it, there was an Intent, that all
 People who should *ever* inhabit within the Pro-
 vince, should enjoy the same *Liberties* and *Pri-
 vileges* as if in *England*: And, by a late memo-
 rable Case determined at the highest Court of
 Common Law at Home, it was decreed, That
*no Person can be held as a Slave, otherwise than
 by an express Law of the Country he lives in*, and
 that there is any such Law in the Province of the
Massachusetts-Bay, I absolutely deny; therefore, I
 conceive you cannot in justice to the Negroes,
 your own Consciences, and the Spirit and Inten-
 tion of the Charter, find that they are justly and
 legally kept in *Bondage*, or that they shall be so
 in future.

SECONDLY, I would observe, for the further
 clearing up the Injustice of the Practice of mak-
 ing *Slaves* here, which has given so much real
 Cause of Complaint for Years past, that it is ex-
 pressly against the Laws of God, which are of
 higher Obligation than those of Nations or Pro-
 vinces, as is mentioned in *Exod. xxi. 16. Levit,*
&c.

THIRDDY.

THIRDLY. It is incompatible with the Laws which CHRIST delivered, concerning our Duty one to another, and which is agreeable to the Rules of Nature and Society, *To do unto others as we would they should do to us ;*" If I could content myself to be placed in the same Situation with those Blacks, without murmuring or Discontent, I am sure I should be the very last Person who would wish them freed : But as the very Idea of *Slavery* is so detestable to every generous Mind ; and as we hear daily of Town Meetings, and consulting upon the Infringements that have been lately made upon our natural and Charter Rights, and passing Resolves to that Effect, pray what can we think of ourselves, when there is hardly a Head of a Family but has one or more Examples of *Bondage* in his House.

WHEN the Petition comes before you, I hope, as I doubt not, you will think candidly of their dejected State ; and beg you would revolve in your Minds, the Ideas you entertain of *Liberty*, and Protestations you daily make against *Slavery* ; and then, I am positive, you must give your Voice for *freeing* them, without you act in Opposition to your own Sentiments, a Character unbecoming your Stations.

*These were his Words :—void of delusive Art,
I felt them ; for he spoke them from his Heart.*

HUME.



